satisfactorily and is in general meeting the Quality of Service (QoS) parameters prescribed by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI).

(c) Cellular mobile network of BSNL is being continuously optimized for its performance and monitoring of the network has been strengthened by BSNL to ensure performance as per the QoS parameters prescribed by TRAI. BSNL is also augmenting its network for enhancing its coverage and improving Quality of Service.

Tele-density in rural areas of Rajasthan

2595. DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of revenue villages in Rajasthan that are connected with the telecom network;

(b) the steps Government are taking to improve the tele-density of rural areas;

(c) whether there is any time-frame to get all villages connected; and

(d) if so, the targeted period thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) As on 31st March, 2007, 33,787 villages in the State of Rajasthan have already been provided with Village Public Telephone (VPT) facility.

(b) Following steps have been taken for improving rural tele-density in Rajasthan:—

(i) Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) has entered into an agreement with Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL), Reliance Infocomm Limited (RIL) and Tata Teleservices Limited (TTL) for provision of individual Rural Direct Exchange Lines (RDELs) in 203 commercially unviable Short Distance Charging Areas (SDCAs) in Rajasthan out of total 258 SDCAs in the State.

(ii) Government is in the process of taking necessary action to provide support for provision of infrastructure for mobile services including Wireless Access Services like Wireless in Local Loop (WLL) using

Fixed/Mobile Terminal in rural and remote areas of the country including the State of Rajasthan. The infrastructure shall be created in those specified areas where there is no existing fixed wireless mobile coverage.

(iii) BSNL has relaxed the distance norms for laying of underground cable upto 5 kms. of telephone exchange for providing telephone connections and landline against the earlier standard of 2.5 kms.

(iv) BSNL is deploying WLL in rural areas to meet the demand of telephone connections beyond 5 kms. of telephone exchange.

(v) BSNL is deploying its mobile network to covering existing coverage and additional requirements based on customer requirements besides covering villages with population of 5,000 and above. In now planned expansions, BSNL plants to cover villages with population of 1,000 and above.

(c) and (d) Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) has entered into an agreement with Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) in November, 2004 for provision of Village Public Telephones (VPTs) in remaining 66,822 unconnected villages in the country including 12,386 unconnected villages in Rajasthan. This excludes villages having population less than 100, laying in thick forest areas/naxalite infested areas etc. Out of 12,386 unconnected villages, 9,909 villages have already been provided with VPTs by BSNL as on 31st October, 2006. The remaining villages will be provided VPTs progressively by November, 2007.

Suggestions given by Talwar Commission

2596. SHRI P.R. RAJAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of extra departmental officials who are working with the Postal Service;

(b) whether Government would consider the suggestions of Talwar Commission which was appointed by the Narasimha Rao Government to enquire about the conditions of the employees; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) The